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MALAYSIA: Increased counterinsurgency efforts in East Malaysia over the past year have had some modest successes.

Malaysian officials are satisfied with their intensified counterinsurgency program in the Borneo state of Sarawak, where the activities of an estimated 1,000 Communist dissidents--mostly Chinese--have put a continuing drain on government resources. The program to decrease civilian defections to the terrorist side has had some impact, the amnesty program has increased voluntary surrenders, and the issuing of arms to remote villages has brought some improvement in rural security.

The government has also taken steps to correct irritating aspects of its earlier efforts. Better discipline has been imposed on West Malaysian troops in Sarawak, contributing to a marked reduction in the kind of incidents that had negated earlier military gains. The replacement of the local military commander with an officer more acceptable to the local population may also improve the military's image.

The Sarawak insurgency will remain a nagging problem for Kuala Lumpur, but these limited gains should help reduce its potential for serious troublemaking.

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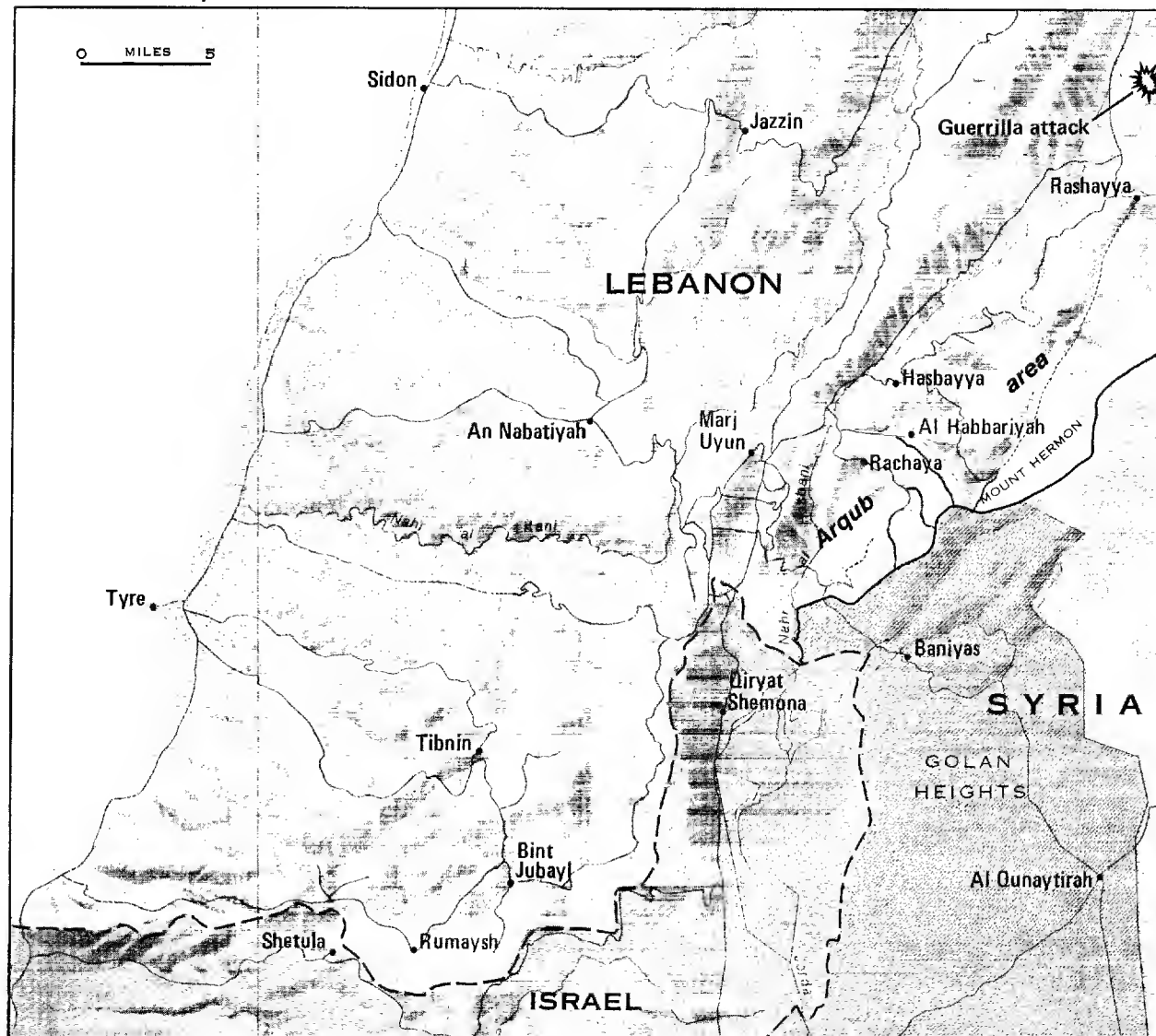
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Lebanon/Fedayeen Clash



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LEBANON-FEDAYEEN: An attack by fedayeen yesterday against an army checkpoint stirred Lebanese apprehensions regarding increased guerrilla activity in the border area with Israel.

The fedayeen [] drove up to the roadblock and fired on troops manning the position. Two Lebanese were killed; the guerrillas escaped.

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The Lebanese are concerned that the attack, without ostensible provocation, may be an attempt by the fedayeen to stir up trouble in the sensitive border area, north of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. The Lebanon-Israel border has been generally quiet since the Lebanese crackdown on the fedayeen last September. This incident, however, confirms reports of some recent guerrilla reinfiltration into the sensitive border zone.

Israeli strikes, last month, against guerrilla bases in northern Lebanon may have prompted the fedayeen to prepare a retaliatory raid into Israel, despite Lebanon's prohibition against cross-border operations. Yesterday's clash may have been triggered by a step-up in the past few weeks of army patrols searching for guerrillas in the forbidden areas.

The killings are certain to raise tensions, and the army can be expected to redouble its efforts to clamp down on fedayeen activity in the border region.

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NOTE

CAMBODIA: In the wake of the bombing of the palace and the street disorders last weekend, the government is tightening controls over the population. The National Assembly on 21 March ratified the state of emergency recently promulgated earlier by Lon Nol. The extra-legal powers granted the government are to last for six months. Strict censorship laws have been announced. In an apparent effort to prevent students and teachers from assembling on an organized basis, the government has rescinded an earlier decree ordering that classes be resumed next week. Instead, the students have been called on to "participate in the defense and development of the Republic."

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